

## THRONES AND CROWNS.

THE FORMER A MERE METAPHOR, THE LATTER FAST BECOMING SO.

Among the most striking manifestations of the growth of democracy in Europe is the disappearance of thrones, which are no longer a reality but merely a metaphor. That is to say, people talk of a monarch's "accession to the throne," of his being "firmly seated on his throne," and in some instances of the "throne tottering." But these are only figures of speech. Were these persons to be asked to describe the throne of any particular sovereign and to give details either as to its appearance or its location, they would be at a loss for a reply. True, there are some chairs of state—each ruler possesses a number of them for the matter of that—which are sometimes officially designated as thrones. But they are merely makeshifts, only thrones for the time being, just as long as the monarch or his consort are seated thereon, and they descend to the level of ordinary chairs of state the very moment that their royal or imperial occupants leave them. "The" Throne, however, the raised, majestic and jeweled seat of judgment whence the sovereign went in olden times to administer justice to his people and to issue his edicts, and the very steps leading up to which were invested with a species of sanctity, has vanished, and it is probable that before long crowns will follow suit, these haubergs of royalty having become obsolete and out of date.



QUEEN VICTORIA'S THRONE.

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Who, for instance, can determine which is the throne of Great Britain? Is it the stone coronation chair of King Edward the Confessor, in which every sovereign who has reigned over England during the last thousand years has been crowned? Is it the gorgeous chair of state which occupies the centre of the dais in the House of Lords, or that queer kind of musical arrangement on which the Queen has sat, half leans, when she presides at the Drawing-rooms held at Buckingham Palace? Or is it, perhaps, the gilt armchair in which she takes her place when she accords audience to foreign envoys at Windsor for the purpose of receiving either their letters of credence or recall? Not one of these seats can claim the exclusive right to describe itself as the throne of England, though were they asked to choose, most people would be inclined to accord the title to the coronation chair in Westminster Abbey. And yet it is only used once in a lifetime by each of the English sovereigns, namely, on the day when they are invested with the crown by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, in the presence of the Peers, of the Parliament and of the great officers of the realm. There is only one sovereign in English history who has sat twice in that seat, and that is Queen Victoria, the second occasion having been the jubilee anniversary of her accession. The chair is familiar to every American who has visited Westminster Abbey, and the venerable relic is, to my mind, infinitely more imposing and impressive in its simple



STATE CHAIR OF THE KING OF BAVARIA.

grandeur than the somewhat gaudy chair of state in the House of Lords, surmounted by its highly decorative canopy, which is paneled in the most intricate and rococo manner with roses, shamrocks, thistles, lions passant, unicorns and, in fact, all the heraldic emblems of Great Britain and Ireland. This chair itself is made of wood, gold, ivory and silver. The royal coat of arms is carved and gilded on the back, while the arms of the chair are serpentine creations terminating in a pair of lion's paws. Some idea of its intrinsic value may be gained when it is stated that the cloth of gold with which it is upholstered cost in the neighborhood of \$5,000.

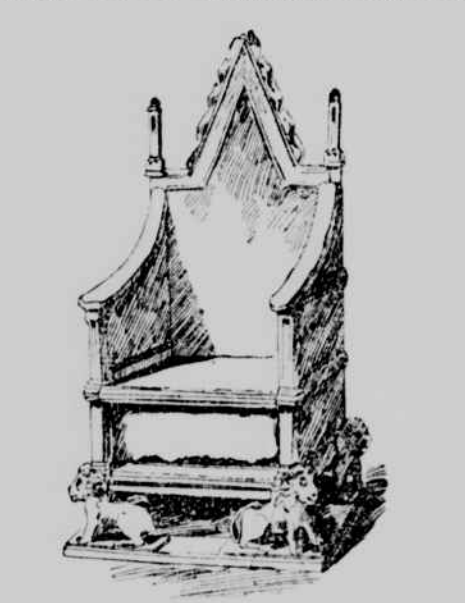
The Chair of Russia is, to my knowledge, at least a dozen chairs of state, each of which is designated from time to time as a throne; and yet not one of them can lay claim to that exclusive designation. There is, for instance, the chair of state which belonged to Ivan the Terrible. This is made entirely of turquoises set as close to one another as cobblestones in a pavement, the back alone containing 10,000 of these gems, which were selected from the finest specimens known at the time. It is preserved in the treasure chambers of the Kremlin, at Moscow. Then, too, there is the chair of state in St. George's Hall of the Winter Palace at St. Petersburg. It is made of the costliest woods with ivory and gold, and is richly jeweled, the back being decorated with royal eagles in gold and silver. The cushion is of ermine, the arms being composed of curious tussockle rests.

Will anybody tell me which is the Papal throne? I myself know of at any rate three Holy seats that are designated as such, one of them being the throne in the chapel of St. Peter's and another in the Vatican apartment where the Pope usually grants audiences, while besides these there is the famous and unique "Sedia gestatoria," or throne borne upon the shoulders of attendants. From this the Pontiff is accustomed to bless the faithful while being carried from the Vatican into the great Basilica. It is covered entirely with gold, is richly jeweled, and represents an intrinsic value of about \$100,000.

Equally difficult would it be to determine which is the Bavarian throne. For it might be any one of the dozen or so \$50,000 chairs of state, exquisitely carved and thickly covered with gold and jewels, which the late King Louis had scattered about his various palaces and chateaux. When we hear of the Imperial throne and imperial crown of Germany, it is just as well to remember that neither the one nor the other is as yet in existence, although the Emperor has under consideration the designs for an Imperial chair of state as well as for the crown and other insignia of an Emperor of Germany. Whether these designs will be put into execution or not is

extremely doubtful. The most sensible of the young Emperor's advisers and most sincere among his friends have strongly counselled him to dispense with the ceremony of coronation, which is becoming more and more obsolete, and which, moreover, might give rise to awkward questions as to whether he should be crowned as Emperor or merely as King of Prussia. There are a large number of sovereigns now living who have never taken the trouble to be crowned. Among them are the King of Italy, the present and late Kings of Spain, the Queen of Holland, the King of Bavaria and the King of Saxony. The Czar was crowned several years after his accession to the throne, while the late Emperor William of Germany was never crowned as such at all. The sovereign who makes use of his crown most frequently is, curiously enough, that most simple, unaffected and democratic of all the monarchs of Europe, King Oscar of Sweden, who dons it each time that he opens Parliament at Stockholm or at Christiania. It scarcely adds to the pomp of his coming down to the throne over his years and gives one somewhat the impression of a derby hat worn on the back of the head and pulled down over the ears. Indeed, it is only the King's majestic stature and dignified bearing that preserve him from looking ridiculous when he has got it upon his head.

Emperor Francis Joseph has been crowned only as King of Hungary, and that after being on the throne for nearly twenty years. He has never been crowned as Emperor of Austria. Neither is it likely that his successor will be crowned as such. For the last occasion on which an Emperor of Austria was crowned, the ceremony, in accordance with time-honored custom, took place at Frankfurt on the Main, which is now part of the Kingdom of Prussia, and at Milan, which now forms part of the dominions of King Humbert. The crown with which Emperor Ferdinand of Austria, by the by, was crowned at Milan in 1838 is the only bauble of that kind possessed by Humbert as King of Italy. He has never had an occasion to wear it, and it is preserved with other sacred relics in the high altar of the cathedral at Monza. It bears the name of the "Iron Crown" and consists of a band of gold adorned with numerous precious stones and lined on the inside with a strip of iron said to have been made from a nail used to fasten Christ to the Cross; this, it is believed, was brought from Palestine by Empress Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, more than 1,000 years ago. With this cincture have been crowned thirty-four Lombard Kings, the great Emperor Charles V. of Germany and Spain, Emperor Napoleon I. and, as stated above, the Austrian Emperor Ferdinand in 1838. It was removed by the Austrians during the Italian war of 1859, but they were forced to return it to the Italian Government after the peace of 1866. King Charles of Rumania's coronations crown bears an analogy to that of King Humbert in that it



CORONATION CHAIR OF THE KINGS OF ENGLAND.

rather steel, enters into its composition. It is made almost entirely of steel, the metal being that of Turkish gun barrels and swords taken from the enemy during the war of 1878, at the close of which the coronation took place. It was meant to symbolize the fact that it had been won by the sword.

Neither King Louis XVIII of France nor King Louis Philippe was ever crowned, and had Emperor Frederick survived, he would assuredly have refrained from so superfluous a piece of mummery. With the exception of King Oscar of Sweden, I have never known a monarch to wear a crown save at his or her coronation ceremony; and inasmuch as the majority of the rulers of Europe have never gone through this ceremony, it necessarily follows that they have no coronation crown, and it seems destined to become before long as obsolete and as much of a figure of speech as the throne.

EX-ATTACHE.

## HE MADE CARFARE OUT OF IT.

A BROKER WHO TOOK A PROFITABLE LITTLE TRIP TO PHILADELPHIA.

The ways of the New-York broker are artful and his eyes are always open for an opportunity. When he has a chance to "make a good bargain" he doesn't let grass grow under his feet.

The head of a steamship company recently said to a Wall Street broker:

"I wish I could get a certain pier privilege; it's so and so."

"Well, why don't you go and get it?" asked the broker.

"I can't seem to get hold of it."

"The pier privilege," said the broker, "isn't in my line; but how much would you give me for this privilege?"

"I'll give you \$100,000 a month for a year."

The broker said that he would see what he could do. He was met by a Philadelphia man, and the next afternoon the man from Wall Street walked into the office of the pier-owner in Philadelphia.

"I want you to buy some bonds," he said.

"Don't want to buy anything," was the answer.

"But these are gilt-edged; you never saw anything better."

"Can't buy anything. Haven't any money. Got a lot of things on my hands that aren't paying a cent. These are hard times, I've got to sell."

"Why, there's a pier in your city that isn't doing what it ought to do for some one to take it."

"Well," said the broker, "I want to sell you some of these bonds. I could make a fortune out of them. I could make a fortune out of them. I could make a fortune out of them."

"Wouldn't you take them to get rid of your pier?"

"I am carrying all I want."

"Well, maybe I'll take your pier anyway. How much do you want for it?"

"I don't know," said the broker, "I've got to see what I can do."

The broker thought he might as well take the pier, even if he couldn't strike a bargain. He came back the next morning to the New-York steamship man.

"I can get that pier for you for a year," he said.

"I'll give you \$100,000 a year."

The pier was sold, and the broker was paid \$100,000 a year for a year.

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